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SOME RARE BIRDS AND SETS OF EGGS FROM THE CAPE REGION OF LOWER CALIFORNIA

By JOHN E. THAYER

MR. Wilmot W. Brown has been collecting for me in the vicinity of La Paz, Lower California, for nearly a year. Among the rare sets of eggs he has sent me I think one of the most interesting is a set of Mangrove Warblers (*Dendroica bryanti castaneiceps*). Unfortunately he was unable to collect but one set, containing three eggs. He found two other nests, one with eggs so far advanced that he could only save one, and the other containing young. The nest with three eggs I have in my collection, also the other two nests.

These nests, especially on the outside, look much more like Vireos' than they do like Yellow Warblers' (*Dendroica aestiva*). The nest with eggs is made (and the others resemble it very much) of light green fern down, cobwebs and light-colored dried grasses, with a few white feathers plastered on the outside. It is beautifully lined with feathers. It is not so perfectly shaped or so well made as the Yellow Warbler's nest. It would seem that three eggs are the complete set. Mr. Brown found this nest at Pichalique Bay, near La Paz, Lower California, June 2, 1908, in a mangrove tree, ten feet from the ground. Incubation was advanced.

The eggs measure .68×.53, .67×.52, .68×.53, and look very much like the Yellow Warbler's, but are not marked so heavily.

The second set he found at San Jose, near La Paz. The nest was on the edge of a very muddy lagoon in a mangrove tree, about five feet from the ground. Incubation was very far advanced, so only one egg out of the three could be saved.

On June 16, at San Jose, Mr. Brown found another nest which contained three young; by June 25 they had left the nest except one, which was dead. This nest was placed on a mangrove bush on an island in a lagoon.

Mr. Brown collected a very large series of these birds as he knew their song and could imitate it; otherwise, he said it would have been a most difficult task as they are very shy. Mr. Frazar, in Mr. Brewster's interesting book on "The Birds of the Cape Region of Lower California", says he took only eight in all and did not shoot more than a pair in any one day. He notes the bird as "rare". That was in 1887; since that time they must have increased.

Mr. Brown says, "I found the Mangrove Warbler a rare bird, but my previous experience with this species in Panama, the Pearl Islands, and in Yucatan is what made me successful. I learned its song and alarm note in 1893. The first morning I went into the mangrove swamps of La Paz I whistled the song of the Yucatan species and the birds answered me; this is the secret of my success, for the species is very secretive in its habits. I found it so difficult to get that I offered fifty cents apiece to the duck hunters and others, including the local taxidermist, but they all failed to get it! By covering eight miles of territory I generally managed to get four or five. Sometimes when I shot one it would fall in the mangroves, with a tide running fast. Under such conditions it generally took a long time to find it, and a great deal of cutting with the machete."

Brown found one nest of the St. Lucas Swallow (*Tachycineta thalassina brachyptera*) at Pichalique, near La Paz. It was situated in a depression on the face of a cliff among the rocks. It contained two eggs. The nest was made of dried grasses and lined with hair. The eggs are pure white and measure .65×.51 and .66×.50.

Altho he collected a large series of the Frazar Green Heron (*Butorides vires-*

cens frazari) he only took three sets of eggs of three each. He also took sets of the following species at La Paz: *Guara alba*, *Ardea herodias*, *Egretta candidissima*, *Aegialitis wilsonia*, *Melopelia asiatica*, *Cardinalis cardinalis igneus*, *Auriparus flaviceps*, and *Poliophtila caerulea obscura*.

He also found two eggs of the Belding Rail (*Rallus beldingi*). They were badly eaten by mice, the nest evidently having been deserted. Brown collected a series of thirteen of these birds. He writes, "As for the Belding Rail, I found this species a most difficult one to collect on account of its retiring habits in the dense mangrove jungle, where the branches and long roots are interwoven and interlaced. You can not enter a foot without cutting with axe and machete. In my search for the nest and eggs of this Rail I cut trails thru various parts of the mangrove tangle, but was unable to find but an abandoned nest with two eggs which the mice had nearly destroyed. The collecting of this Rail is a question of high tides. At low tide this Rail can not be hunted. He keeps in the depths of the mangrove tangle where he feeds on small crabs, etc.; but when there is a very high tide the water forces him to seek his food more inland, along the shore outside of the swamp; then by careful and patient hunting you can occasionally shoot one, but it is very slow work and requires much time and patience. In fact, for a long time I thought I should be unsuccessful in my search; for altho I hunted faithfully for it over a month I was unable to find one until I thought of the high tide plan."

From August 2 to September 2 Brown collected at Sierra de la Laguna. He took seven sets of the Viosca Pigeon (*Columba fasciata viosca*). The last set was taken September 2, and was fresh. These birds lay but one egg. He also collected three sets of the Thick-billed Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus magnirostris*); also the Frazar Vireo, Western Warbling Vireo and Green-backed Goldfinch. He collected large series of these birds, and of *Junco bairdi*, but he was too late for the eggs of the latter.

Lancaster, Massachusetts.

NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF SOUTHWESTERN MONTROSE COUNTY, COLORADO

By EDWARD R. WARREN

WITH ONE MAP

THE following notes have been gathered by the writer during a couple of short trips in April, 1906 and 1908, and are greatly supplemented by notes obtained from Mr. C. H. Smith of Coventry, who has resided there for the past ten years. As practically nothing ornithological has ever been published concerning this region, it has seemed worth while to write up these notes for THE CONDOR, scanty as they may be.

Roughly speaking, the region covered is that portion of Montrose County lying south and west of the Uncompahgre Plateau, as shown on the accompanying map, and a few notes are also given from points in the adjoining portion of San Miguel County, to which county this region really belongs, speaking from geographical relations. It is a mesa, 7000 feet above sea level at the eastern end, but gradually becoming lower to the west. Thru this mesa the San Miguel River has cut its bed in a northwesterly direction, in places several hundred feet below the mesa level, and joining the Dolores River about six miles south of the Mesa County